

Report to Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee

22 March 2022

Subject:	Social Media Policy for Elected Members
Director:	Surjit Tour - Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer
Contact Officer:	Vanessa Maher-Smith Principal Lead for Governance and Business Support & Solicitor

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That consideration be given to the revised Social Media Policy prior to submission to Full Council for approval.

2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 The Social Media Policy was approved in March 2021 and is therefore due for review.

- 2.2 It has now been considered by Officers (see Appendix 1) who have determined that the content is still relevant. As such, no changes are required to the body of the document, other than 2 minor proposed amendments as follows:

- i) On page 4 under title “Members Should” there is a typographical error and ‘sire’ should read ‘side’.
- ii) On page 4 under title “Members Should” the following paragraph:

“These images are owed by the council (you as an individual) and the council (“I”) do not agree to the publication/ sharing/ retweeting of these images without our consent”



Should be amended to:

“These images are owed by the council (“me”) and the council (“I”) do not agree to the publication/ sharing/ retweeting of these images without our (“my”) consent”







This will ensure clarity if members wish to copy the paragraph.

- iii) On page 5 under the heading “Members Should Not” the reference to the Data Protection Policy should be amended to the Information Governance Framework. This will avoid any confusion as to which policy is being referred to.

2.3 As part of the Member Development Programme, Social Media Training should be offered to all members.

2.4 Given this is a specialist area, it is considered that this would best be delivered by an external trainer. Options for the training are being investigated and a further report will be submitted to a future meeting.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

		The Social Media Policy for Elected Members forms part of the suite of documents associated with the Members’ Code of Conduct and Arrangements for dealing with complaints under the Code. There is not a direct link to the objectives of the Corporate Plan, however, high standards of conduct are an essential part of good corporate governance and this in turn has a direct relationship with the delivery of high quality services.
		
		

4 Context and Key Issues

4.1 Social media can be a fantastic tool for Councillors in promoting themselves and the Council when it is used properly. It is necessary to have a Social Media Policy and also provide member training on all aspects of social media so they are equipped to use it to their advantage and avoid some of the pitfalls.



5 Implications

Resources:	There are no resource implications arising from this report.
Legal and Governance:	The Social Media Policy will ensure that members are aware of their obligations and use of social media effectively. It will also reduce the risk of any potential threats of litigation that may result from it being used incorrectly eg claims of defamation, copyright and will be complemented by provision of training.
Risk:	As above, this will reduce the risks of any potential threats of litigation due to social media being used incorrectly.
Equality:	There are no equality issues.
Health and Wellbeing:	There is no impact on health or wellbeing
Social Value	There are no implications for social value.

6 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Social Media Policy

7. Background Papers

None.

